



State of New Jersey

THE PINELANDS COMMISSION

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CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN
GovernorREPORT ON AN APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC
DEVELOPMENT and CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

December 22, 2000

Applicant: Thomas Daghini, Supervising Engineer
Atlantic County Department of Public Works
P.O. Box 719
Northfield, NJ 08225

Application #: 95-1582.06P

Location: Green Bank Bridge
County Route 563
Mullica Township
Washington Township

FINDINGS OF FACT

This application is for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the existing bridge over the Mullica River along Route 563 in Mullica and Washington Townships. The project is located in the Pinelands Village of Greenbank and in the Preservation Area District.

The applicant is proposing to rehabilitate the existing Green Bank Bridge due to deteriorating structural bridge elements. The existing cross roadway contains two lanes that vary from 10 feet to 12.5 feet. The proposed lanes will be 11.5 feet in width. The replacement of the bridge approach superstructure and substructure is also proposed.

The parcel has been inspected by a member of the Commission's staff. In addition, the appropriate resource capability maps and data available to the staff have been reviewed.

The project will be located over existing paved, grass and gravel areas and wetlands associated with the Mullica River. The project will result in the disturbance of 0.01 acre of wetlands.

Based upon the proposed limits of disturbance and an inspection of the areas that will be disturbed, it was determined that a survey for the presence of threatened or endangered species of

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plants and wildlife was not required.

The Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan requires that public fishing, crabbing or canoe access shall be provided with bridge crossings as appropriate (N.J.A.C. 7:50-4.57(a)2). The applicant states that providing such access is not appropriate as part of this project. This project is a rehabilitation of an existing bridge. Provision of access would require significant disturbance of wetlands to allow for parking associated with access. Additionally, the applicant states that the design of the rehabilitation has maintained the appearance of the existing historical structure. The improvements needed to provide safe access would not be consistent with the historical design.

The applicant has demonstrated that there is no feasible alternative to the proposed development that does not involve development in wetlands or wetland buffers or that will result in a less significant adverse impact on wetlands. The proposed development is a modification of an existing facility. The proposed development will not result in a substantial impairment of the resources of the Pinelands. With the conditions below, all practical measures are being taken to mitigate the impact on the wetlands. The applicant has demonstrated that the need for the bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction overrides the importance of protecting the wetlands. The bridge improvements are necessary to provide safer roadway conditions.

There will be no increase in the volume and rate of storm water run-off from the parcel after development than occurred prior to the proposed development.

A cultural resource survey was prepared for the project. The survey report was completed in 1995 and submitted to the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (HPO) and subsequently to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Act. HPO concluded, and the Advisory Council later concurred, that only the central portion of the bridge structure, containing the mechanisms of the 1926 Strauss overhead counterweight, single leaf bascule, was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (and hence for Pinelands Designation). The applicant submitted copies of correspondence from HPO, which determined that the project as proposed would not have an adverse impact upon the elements of the bridge which were Register eligible and was therefore acceptable.

With the conditions recommended below, the proposed development will be consistent with all the management standards contained in Subchapter 6 of the Plan and Burlington and Atlantic Counties' certified master plans and land use ordinances.

The applicant has provided the requisite public notice. The Pinelands Commission has not received any public comments concerning the application.

CONCLUSION

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:50-6.156(a)1 and 4 require that a Certificate of Appropriateness be issued before the proposed improvements may be constructed. This Certificate of Appropriateness identifies the treatment required to protect significant characteristics of the Designated resource from among three alternatives:

- a. Preservation of the resource in place, if possible;
- b. Preservation of the resource at another location, if preservation in place is not possible; or
- c. Recordation, if either of the other alternatives is possible.

Provided that the bridge reconstruction is accomplished in a manner consistent with the plans approved by HPO, the proposed development is consistent with the standards for preservation in place, which is the preferred alternative. Therefore, it is recommended that the Pinelands Commission grant the Certificate of Appropriateness requiring preservation of the significant resources in place with the conditions below.

The proposed bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction is a permitted use in a Pinelands Village (N.J.A.C. 7:50-5.23(b)12) and in the Preservation Area District (N.J.A.C. 7:50-5.2(a)). If the following conditions are imposed, the proposed development will be consistent with the management standards contained in Subchapter 6 of the Comprehensive Management Plan. With the following conditions, the proposed development will be consistent with Burlington and Atlantic Counties' certified master plans and land use ordinances.

As the proposed development conforms to the standards set forth in N.J.A.C. 7:50-4.57, it is recommended that the Pinelands Commission approve the proposed development with the following conditions:

1. Except as modified by the below conditions, the proposed development shall adhere to the plans, consisting of 16 sheets, prepared by the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation and dated December 8, 2000.
2. Disposal of any construction debris or excess fill in the Pinelands Area may only occur at a licensed facility authorized by the Pinelands Commission.
3. Appropriate measures shall be taken during construction to preclude sedimentation from entering wetlands.
4. Landscaping shall adhere to the requirements of the Comprehensive Management Plan.
5. Any required authorization from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall be obtained prior to disturbance of any wetlands.

APPEAL

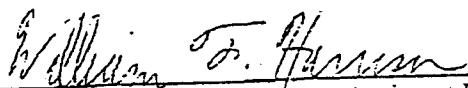
Any interested person may appeal the Executive Director's determination on this application to the Commission. The appeal must be made within 18 days of the date of this letter by giving notice, by Certified mail, of the appeal to the Pinelands Commission. Said notice shall include:

1. the name and address of the person requesting the appeal;

2. the application number;
3. a brief statement of the basis for the appeal; and
4. a certificate of service, (a notarized statement), indicating that service of the notice has been made by Certified mail, on:
 - a. the applicant (unless the applicant is requesting the appeal);
 - b. Secretary, Washington Township Planning Board;
 - c. Secretary, Burlington County Planning Board;
 - d. Secretary, Mullica Township Planning Board;
 - e. Mullica Township Environmental Commission;
 - f. Atlantic County Policy, Planning and Economic Development Office.

Any appeal will be referred to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. If no appeal is received within 18 days of this letter, the Pinelands Commission will act on this application at its meeting on January 12, 2001. At this meeting, the Commission may either approve the determination of the Executive Director or refer the application to the Office of Administrative Law for a Hearing.

Recommended for Approval by:



William F. Harrison, Esq., Assistant Director

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